



# Code of Conduct for Head Start Reviewers (Appendix III)



# Code of Conduct for Head Start Reviewers

The standards of performance listed below provide standard requirements and expectations for Head Start monitoring reviewers. Each reviewer must sign this document at the beginning of each review season prior to participating in any monitoring reviews. An electronic copy remains on file at Danya International, Inc. (“Danya”); the reviewers shall retain a copy for their records. The standards are divided into the following categories: Preparation, Review Procedures and Guidelines, Conflict of Interest, and General Professional Standards.

## ***Preparation***

1. Reviewers must represent their education, experience, and skills accurately, as described in the reviewer profile maintained and updated by Danya for the Head Start Bureau. Reviewers shall accept assignments only in content areas matching their expertise.
2. Reviewers shall remain knowledgeable of Head Start or Early Head Start performance standards and applicable regulations, and they must understand their role as a review team member.
3. Employees working for a Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantee must obtain the required prior approval from the grantee to participate in reviews. A staff member of a deficient grantee and its delegate will not be allowed to participate in reviews until the grantee has been removed from deficiency status. Reviewers must notify the Review Planner (RP) of any change of employment status with the grantee.
4. Reviewers must be prompt in all appointments. If unexpected events delay appearance for an appointment, notify those who are waiting—as well as the team leader—of the change or delay.
5. Reviewers must be prepared to participate in all meetings at the starting time.
6. Reviewers should proactively download the PRISM instrument and latest PRISM software ([www.headstartreviews.com](http://www.headstartreviews.com)).
7. Reviewers must make a proactive effort to remain current on reviewer standards, special announcements, and policy changes by making regular (quarterly) visits to the Monitoring Reviewer Web site.
8. Reviewers are responsible for notifying the RP as soon as possible when travel delays or other emergencies cause a delay or cancellation of the scheduled travel plans.

**Review Procedures and Guidelines**

9. The team leader is the primary responsible agent for the conduct of each review, throughout the review process, and in all interactions with the grantee. Reviewers should:
  - a. Follow the schedules and procedures as outlined by the team leader using the current Head Start PRISM instrument and requirements to complete the assignments.
  - b. Gather and analyze critical information based solely on the *Head Start Program Performance Standards* and applicable regulations.
  - c. Coordinate with the team leader to request information and documentation only as required by the current PRISM instrument and process. Give ample opportunity for program staff members to provide information or documentation needed for the collection and analysis of data to complete the assignment.
  - d. Follow the grantee's chain of command and procedures for reviewing documentation. Return all program materials to the grantee (or as instructed by the team leader) as soon as possible and no later than the closing meeting with the grantee.
  - e. Prior to the summary meeting, prepare and submit to the team leader a written summary and a report of findings as assigned, in accordance with the current PRISM format. Note that responses and notes regarding the Core Questions and/or Protocols should be provided in the corresponding sections for that question.
  - f. Confer with the team leader regarding interpretation of the Federal regulations.
  - g. Refer unusual questions (those that fall outside their area of expertise or outside of responsibilities as a review team member), sensitive issues, and program and community complaints to the team leader for response.
  - h. At the end of the review, all information is considered property of the Federal Government and will be submitted to the team leader. All electronic files are to be deleted from reviewer laptop computers before the summary meeting.
  - i. Protect the confidentiality of all child, family, and staff files by securing and returning them to proper custody.
  - j. Reviewers must initial and date all pages of documentation, such as notes, Core Questions, and other completed tools.

**Conflict of Interest**

10. Any potential conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict of interest must be disclosed at the time of request to serve as a team member on a review. This includes disclosing work as a previous reviewer, consultant, or potential consultant for the grantee being reviewed.

11. Reviewers must remove themselves from participation or discussion at any point that a perceived conflict of interest may arise, or if any other reason exists whereby objectivity or the review itself could be compromised.
12. Reviewers should have no contact with a grantee for a period of 12 months before and after the review occurs.

### ***General Professional Standards***

13. Complete and strict confidentiality is required on all matters and information associated with the grantee being reviewed, including all files (individual, child, family, and staff) and documents reviewed. All discussions and findings pertaining to the grantee and review findings shall not be discussed in public places during the onsite visit. Do not discuss information about the substance and findings of the review with anyone except the team leader, team members, and persons expressly designated by the team leader.
14. Reviewers must adhere to Federal guidelines concerning acceptance and giving of gifts.
15. Reviewers must refrain from alcohol consumption during business hours, including evening meetings associated with the onsite review. Abuse of alcohol or any other drug, legal or illegal, will result in immediate dismissal from the current review by the team leader and permanent removal from the pool of eligible reviewers.
16. Sexual harassment (slurs, jokes, epithets, touching, impeding, body blocking, leering, suggestive gestures, or any other unsolicited, written, verbal, physical, or visual contact with sexual overtures) will result in immediate dismissal from the current review by the team leader and permanent removal from the pool of eligible reviewers.
17. Promotion of services (personal, other firms, or colleagues) in any way or provision of technical assistance to the grantee or any staff members, constituents, or parents during the review is strictly prohibited. Generally, reviewers and any entities associated with the reviewer, should refrain from entering into any work assignments, paid or otherwise, pertaining to a grantee being reviewed for at least 12 months prior to or following completion of the review.
18. Reviewers must behave in a professional manner during the review. Always be courteous, pleasant, and respectful in asking questions, taking part in discussions, or other interactions with the grantee. Respect the knowledge and experience of the grantee staff members, parents, contract staff members, and community partners. Do not engage in gossip or office politics during interactions with program staff members, parents, contract staff members, and community partners. Unprofessional conduct may result in immediate dismissal from a review by the team leader.
19. Reviewers must dress appropriately for work in the grantee's environment. Reviewers should follow local agency work rules regarding smoking, safety, security, food on

the premises, working hours, and other local requirements. Reviewers should request permission before using the grantee's telephone or other equipment for any purpose.

20. Do not offer advice or recommendations to any individual about the quality or operation of the program. Recognize the responsibility of the grantee managers and others to supervise their staff.
21. Always respect the language, culture, and ethnic identity of grantee staff members, parents, contract staff members, and community partners.
22. Reviewers should work collaboratively and cooperatively with other team members. This includes:
  - a. Respecting the skills, experiences, and knowledge of fellow team members;
  - b. Contributing information and analysis of assignments at each team meeting in a concise and orderly manner to facilitate efficient use of the meeting time; and
  - c. Sharing information, actively seeking informed agreement among team members, and fully supporting the final decisions of the team leader.
23. Reviewers must commit to performing and completing PRISM-related tasks ONLY while on assignment. Other distractions should be eliminated (for example, cell phones should be turned off during interviews, data collection, and team meetings).
24. These standards may be updated, modified, or otherwise revised from time to time by Danya and/or the Head Start Bureau. Any such revision will be in writing and provided to reviewers by posting to a Head Start Reviewer-focused Web site prior to its effective date.

### ***Acknowledgement and Acceptance***

I have read, understand, and agree to the standards of performance for Head Start monitoring reviewers (September 2004, Version 1), as set forth above. I understand that failure to comply with these standards may result in a decision for dismissal from the review, and the Head Start Regional Office may recommend to Danya that my name be removed from the pool of potential reviewers.

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Reviewer's Signature and Date

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Printed Name